

## this week in history

### Five Years Ago

**Thursday, February 1, 2007**

A NEW outbreak of toxic blue-green algae in Roebuck Bay has heightened fears the world-renowned feature could be under threat from urban development.

Blooms of the algae, *Lyngbea majuscula*, otherwise known as mermaid hair or stinging limu, have been noticed in recent weeks in waters surrounding Town Beach.

Growth of the algae has been linked to nutrient and dissolved organics from land clearing and alterations in groundwater along with high rainfall and suitable light and temperature.

Department of Environment and Conservation district nature conservation co-ordinator Troy Sinclair said the *lyngbea* seemed to respond to nutrients in the water and townsite development could have contributed to the level of nutrients in Roebuck Bay.

"As the town gets bigger, there are certainly more nutrients coming off the landscape, which is happening in other areas of Australia," he said.

The reports come after a severe *lyngbea* outbreak at the same time last year prompted a call for public help from the Roebuck Bay-Working Group, which wanted to determine whether the blooms were part of a natural phenomenon.

### Ten Years Ago

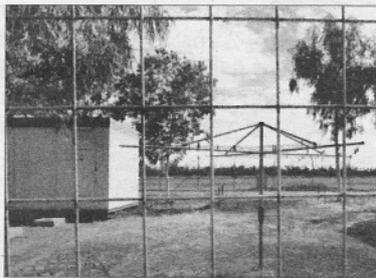
**Thursday, January 31, 2002**

DETENTION centre tension across the country has spread to Curtin, with nine detainees last week attempting self harm, another four on a hunger strike and an investigation underway into claims of child sexual abuse.

A Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs spokesman this week confirmed four detainees had been treated at Derby Regional Hospital after swallowing antiseptic at the weekend.

And he said a further five detainees had committed acts of self-harm but refused to give details.

However, all were treated at the centre's medical facility. Allegations of recent child sexual abuse at Curtin sparked detainees to light protest fires in the grounds



**Curtin detention centre.**

and refugee advocates, including Federal Labor leader Simon Crean, to call for better arrangements for women and children.

A DIMA spokeswoman said the "perpetrators" of the alleged abuse had been identified and isolated within the centre.

The child, a five-year-old Iraqi boy, and his family had been offered support and counselling but remained in the centre.

The spokeswoman said welfare authorities had been notified and action taken was consistent with "current procedures".

### Fifteen Years Ago

**Thursday, January 30, 1997**

BROOME'S liquor licensees have agreed to a six-month trial of a uniform 10am opening time and the phasing out of four-litre wine casks.

The restrictions, echoing similar agreements in Derby, were discussed at a meeting between licensees, the police and Broome Shire Council on Wednesday.

Agreement was reached late last week, as two licensees were initially uncommitted to the decision on four-litre wine casks.

"We're very pleased that it has been settled and we're all working together," Charlie Carters Sea-view manager Ray Diggins said.

"Obviously, this has been influenced by the Derby decision but we were close to reaching an agreement anyway."

The 10am opening time came into effect on January 20 and licensees began running down their stocks of four-litre wine casks this week.

Mr Diggins said he was pleased with the restrictions so far but it was too early to correctly gauge community attitudes.

"Licensees do have the community's interested at heart and are keen to provide ongoing support," he said.